

REMARKS

Claims 26, 25 and 36-39 are presently pending in this application. Claims 18-25, 27-34 and 40 have been canceled in this paper without prejudice. The applicants do not disclaim the subject matter of the canceled claims and expressly reserve the right to file a continuation application directed to the canceled subject matter.

In the December 27, 2006 Office Action, claims 18-25, 27-34 and 40 were rejected. More specifically, the status of the application in light of this Office Action is as follows:

(A) Claims 18, 21-25, 28, 30, 31, 33, 34, and 40 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) over U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2002/0042205 to McMillin et al. ("McMillin"), which includes by reference in its entirety U.S. Patent No. 6,245,192 to Dhindsa et al. ("Dhindsa");

(B) Claims 19, 20 and 29 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) over McMillin;

(C) Claims 27 and 32 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) over the combination of McMillin and U.S. Patent No. 6,905,547 to Londergan et al. ("Londergan");

(D) Claims 26 and 35 were indicated as being allowable if rewritten independent form; and

(E) Claims 36-39 were allowed.

1. **Response to the Section 102 and Section 103 Rejections**

Claims 18-25, 27-34 and 40 were rejected over McMillin alone or in combination with Londergan. These claims have been canceled without prejudice, and therefore these rejections are now moot.

2. Allowable and Allowed Subject Matter

The applicants would like to thank the Examiner for (a) indicating that claims 26 and 25 are allowable and (b) allowing claims 36-39. Claims 26 and 35 have been amended in independent form, and thus the objection to these claim should be withdrawn. Additionally, although the applicants agree that claims 26, 35 and 36-39 are patentable over the cited references, the applicant's attorney notes that the claims may be allowable for reasons other than those identified by the Examiner. The applicants, therefore, do not concede that the Examiner's characterization of the terms of the claims and the prior art are correct.

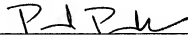
Conclusion

In view of the foregoing, the pending claims comply with 35 U.S.C. § 112 and are patentable over the cited art. The Applicants accordingly request reconsideration of the application and a Notice of Allowance. If the Examiner has any questions or believes a telephone conference would expedite prosecution of this application, the Examiner is encouraged to contact Paul Parker at (206) 359-3258.

Respectfully submitted,

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